



News Release

For immediate release: September 7, 2018

(18-127)

Contact: [Liz Coleman](#), Environmental Public Health Office 360-481-2016

Raw milk consumption linked to *E. coli* illnesses

OLYMPIA – The Department of Health cautioned consumers today to be aware of the risks of drinking raw milk especially for infants and young children, older adults, pregnant women, and people with weakened immune systems.

“Raw milk doesn’t go through the pasteurization process where harmful germs and bacteria are destroyed. This puts infants, young children, the elderly, pregnant women and those with a weakened immune system at a greater risk of illness when they drink it,” said Dr. Scott Lindquist, Washington state communicable disease epidemiologist.

Lab results recently confirmed a child under 5 years old from Island County and resident in their 70s of Clallam County became ill with an *E. coli* infection after drinking Dungeness Valley Creamery raw milk.

[E. coli](#) infections may cause severe diarrhea, stomach cramps and bloody stool. Symptoms generally appear three to four days after exposure, but can take up to nine days to appear. In some cases, the infection causes a serious disease resulting in kidney failure.

Individuals who have any of these symptoms after consuming raw milk should consult their health care provider and notify their local health departments.

More information on the health risks of drinking raw milk can be found [here](#).

The [Washington State Department of Agriculture \(WSDA\)](#) regulates raw milk in the state.

The DOH [website](#) is your source for a healthy dose of information. Find us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on [Twitter](#). Sign-up for the DOH blog, [Public Health Connection](#).

###